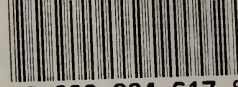


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* Blue * Beard. *

By ✓
Charlotte Pondleton

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◁KERMESSE▷

For the Benefit of the Village Improvement Society,

BAR HARBOR, MAINE,

1890.

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u, Chap. 28, 1912.

→ BLUE BEARD. ←

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

BLUE BEARD.

FATIMA'S BROTHERS.

FATIMA.

SISTER ANNE.

CHORUS OF WEDDING GUESTS AND DECAPITATED WIVES.

SCENE FIRST—Ball following the Wedding of Blue Beard and
Fatima.

Enter Blue Beard and Fatima preceded by wedding guests,
who sing.

CHORUS.

Merrily sing, hurrah, hurrah !
Singing as we march this lay
Of Fatima and her wedding day :
Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah, hurrah.

See her come in a gown of white,
Bright as a star in the summer night,
Shedding far its radiant light :
Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah, hurrah !

Blue Beard smiles in conscious pride,
As he sees his lovely bride

Walking daintily at his side :

Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah, hurrah.

Blue Beard and Fatima with wedding guests dance a minuet.

CURTAIN FALLS.

SCENE SECOND—*A room in Blue Beard's Castle. Fatima brooding at her casement while Blue Beard and the hounds lie at her feet.*

At last I bring you home, my sweet,
My dainty dear no more to roam,
Here shall you broider all the day
While round about your greyhound plays.

Or I will take you to the chase
When down the wind your falcon flies,
And as you ride, upon your grace,
Most lover-like, I feast mine eyes.

FATIMA.

Ah, Blue Beard, was there ever wife
So blessed as I, who share thy life
In all things, say love, art thou mine
From great to least as I am thine?

BLUE BEARD, *frowning*,

Nay, little wife, thou shouldst not ask
To share my cares, enough to bask
In the bright sunshine of my smiles ;
Nay tempt me not with pretty wiles.

FATIMA, *pouting*,

Ah, wicked mate ; I see you hide
Some secret from your hapless bride.

BLUE BEARD.

I prithee, sweetheart, do not chide.

FATIMA.

If I indeed did sway thy heart
Naught would'st thou hold from me apart.

BLUE BEARD.

Well little one, my faith in thee
I'll prove, (*giving the key*) my sweet you hold our fate
In your white hands ; behold this key.
I do confide to thee my mate.
But if thou dost thy vow foreswear
Fatima then beware, beware !
I go to hunt the boar to-day.

FATIMA.

Nay, leave me not, return I pray.

BLUE BEARD, *going*.

Nay naughty child good day, good day.

Exit, Blue Beard.

FATIMA, *sings*.

My love rides forth to the chase to-day
With hawk and hound ;
While I bide home with my falcon gay,
Tassel bound.

Speaks.

Nay what is it that he would hide
With this key hanging at my side.

Sings.

She is seventeen,
Sun-bright eyes and hair

In her cheeks are set
Roses bright and rare.

She is seventeen,
Airy is her tread,
Idle dreams of love
Flitting through her head.

Speaks.

I did not promise, 'twas he spake
I made no vow that I should break.
With all his goods he'd me endowed.
What can it be? What can it be?
In the right door I'll fit the key;
I will not turn it, can there be
Harm if I only fit the key?

Fitting the key.

What's thine is mine; I can't refrain!

Opening the door.

Ah! What is this red, ugly stain?
I'll look though I should lose my life
By looking, am I not his wife?

*Throws open the door and discovers Blue Beard's wives hanging in
a row by the hairs of their heads, who sing in wierd, sepulchral
tones.*

CHORUS.

Fifteen wives Blue Beard had,
Some were good and some were bad.

All were far too passing fair
Thus to dangle in the air,

By their dark or golden hair.

Fatima, beware, beware.

FATIMA, *Who has stood spellbound with horror, now slams to the door and comes slowly down the stage rubbing the key in mock tragic Lady Macbeth fashion.*

Blue Beard will find what I'm about,

I'll rub it well! It will not out!

Out ugly spot, out, I say, out!

Enter, BLUE BEARD.

The angry boar my trusty spear

Did all to shiver and I'm here.

But why so pale, and cold? alack

Are you not glad to see me back?

FATIMA, *trembling,*

Methought thou wouldst not come to-day.

BLUE BEARD.

And did you wish me hence, I pray?

FATIMA.

Ah, Blue Beard, do not be so rude.

BLUE BEARD.

Madam explain this silly mood.

Ah, ha! You tremble. Let me see,

Fatima, my enchanted key.

FATIMA.

Your Fatima you do not doubt?

Aside.

The ugly spot, it will not out.

BLUE BEARD, *Wrenching the key from her hand.*

I knew it by your guilty eye ;
Fatima, now prepare to die.

FATIMA.

Ah ! Would that I did never look
Upon them hanging by the hair !

BLUE BEARD.

My first in angry mood, I strook ;
None of the others could I brook ;
And slew them in the graden nook.
Did I not bid you to beware ?
Now guilty one say your last prayer !

FATIMA.

My youth, Blue Beard, I prithee spare.

BLUE BEARD.

For half of fifteen minutes thou
Shalt live, and then I'll keep my vow.

Exit Blue Beard.

FATIMA.

Alas, alas ! where are they all,
My sister and my brothers tall ?

Enter SISTER ANNE.

Sweet sister, why dishevelled so ?

FATIMA.

Ah, sister Anne, well come I trow ;
In half of fifteen minutes know
Blue Beard decrees my head must fall.

SISTER ANNE.

Your brothers will be here this hour.

FATIMA.

Run to the tower. My brothers call.

Exit sister Anne.

Sister Anne, sister Anne what see you now

Coming across the mountain's brow?

SISTER ANNE, *putting her head in through the skylight.*

I see the dust a rolling heap;

Alas, it is a flock of sheep.

BLUE BEARD, *From below, unseen, in deep tones.*

Two minutes till I keep my vow.

FATIMA.

Sister Anne, sister Anne, what see you now?

SISTER ANNE, *As before.*

Horsemen upon the mountain's brow.

BLUE BEARD.

Come down that I may keep my vow.

FATIMA.

Sister Anne, sister Anne, beckon them on.

BLUE BEARD, *Rushing in.*

Thou hast good cause to be so wan,

Kneel false one, kneel and do not stir.

I'll slay thee with my scimeter.

Fatima kneels. Blue Beard grasps her by the hair and whirls his scimeter over her head.

Ere thou canst count one, two, three, four,

Fatima thou shalt live no more,

Count thou the fatal numbers o'er.

FATIMA, *slowly to cause delay.*

One, two, three, three, two and one.

BLUE BEARD.

Go on to four. What huntsman's cor
Dare sound at my Portcellis door?

*Enter Brothers, Wedding guests, decapitated wives and Sister
Anne.*

Her brothers! let me quickly run.

BROTHERS.

False Mohamed, thus we lay you low
And slay you in a single blow.

*Tableau, after which the corpse rises and speaks the Epilogue
thus.*

Be not afeared sweet gentles all
'Twas but a seeming dying fall.

BROTHER.

And if our mummeries have made
An hour pass lightly we're repaid.

SISTER ANNE.

But yet this moral in disguise
Within our little drama lies :

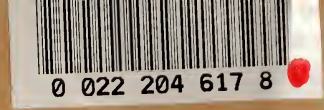
FATIMA.

Sweet maids when you a secret hold
Keep you the trust inviolate.
Nor give your hearts for paltry gold ;
Love guide you in your choice of mate,
And you'll escape the dolorous plight
Of Fatima, and so good night !

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